

Introduction by the Commanding Officer

Welcome,

This guide is for parents of young people joining Coventry Sea Cadets, though I hope that parents of serving cadets will find it useful and wish to keep it handy.

We spend a lot of time teaching the cadets what being a Sea Cadet means and what we expect of them. We train them in our internal procedures and make sure they understand how our systems work. Parents aren't so lucky, many spend only a small amount of time with us during their initial tour of the unit. They receive little or no induction into how the unit works. This guide is aimed at filling the gap and providing parents with important information so that they understand what cadets are being asked to achieve and how they are being cared for.

There is a lot in this guide, but it is all information that parents have asked for in the past. Please read it and let me know if it can be improved or if there is anything missing. The guide is aimed at parents not cadets, anything in this guide that cadets need to know will be covered during their training. However, the contents are not secret and cadets are welcome to read it if they wish.

I hope that this guide assists all parents in being more confident and informed about the unit.

Thank you for taking the time to read it.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Cea', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Lt Cdr (SCC) Frank Cea RNR
Commanding Officer
Coventry Unit SCC.

The Sea Cadet Corps

The Sea Cadet Corps is a national youth organisation. It all began in 1854 when sailors returning from the Crimean war set up the first '*Naval Lads Brigade*'. Since then the Corps has grown to over 400 units and 20,000 cadets. The Sea Cadet Corps is supported by the Sea Cadet Association (SCA) and the Ministry of Defence (MOD). The MOD helps with travelling costs, uniform, boats and allows the use of Navy bases. The SCA, which is a registered charity, provides money for the offshore fleet, national training centres and National Headquarters.

The Sea Cadet Corps is divided into six areas, each of which is split into several geographic Districts of between 6-10 units. Coventry unit is one of 10 units in the Warwickshire District of the South West Area of the Sea Cadet Corps.

Coventry Unit

Coventry unit was started in 1942 during the Second World War and since then has gone from strength to strength. We have won several national trophies and honours during the late 1990s and recent years.

Like all other units Coventry is a registered charity (Number 505694). Individual units rarely get funds directly from the SCA or MOD and each unit is responsible for obtaining its own facilities and raising money to cover its costs. The unit raises money from cadet's monthly donations, its yearly flag week and through grant applications to various bodies.

Sections within the Unit

Sea Cadets (aged 12-18) These are the largest part of the unit, the training is based on naval traditions. They take part in many practical and classroom-based activities.

Junior Sea Cadets (aged 10-12) The juniors have a cut down version of the Sea Cadet training programme and play a lot more games – it's generally much more relaxed.

Aims of the Sea Cadet Corps

The Aim of the Sea Cadet Corps is to help young people towards responsible adulthood by encouraging valuable personal attributes and high standards of conduct, using a nautical theme based on the customs of the Royal Navy.

The aim is achieved by:

- Providing exciting and challenging training of an adventurous nature. This generates self-confidence, self-reliance, initiative, loyalty and a sense of duty.
- Encouraging leadership qualities and team working.
- Discouraging behaviour that is not in keeping with the aim of the Sea Cadets.

Benefits of Being a Sea Cadet

The Sea Cadet Corps offers many activities for cadets. All activities give the chance to achieve qualifications or awards. Some of these qualifications and awards are from external bodies, like the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) or the British Canoe Union (BCU). Where there aren't any external bodies we train to a structured scheme based on Royal Navy standards. This is the case for Marine Engineering, Seamanship, Communications, Writer Stores, Cook Steward and Meteorology.

The unit believes strongly in the importance of organised competition and takes part fully in inter unit competitions at local and national levels. Cadets are expected to train hard and do their best, so that they can be proud of their effort whatever the result. Normally this attitude leads to successful results.

We hold an annual award ceremony where achievements over the year are recognised. Some of the things that are recognised are Best Cadet, Most Improved Cadet, Best Team and many more. The night is always one of the highlights of the unit's social calendar.

While we are not here to recruit for the Royal Navy, cadets that want to join the Navy will find that the Sea Cadets gives a unique insight into naval life. However, even those not wanting to join the forces will find that a Record of Achievement folder full of certificates earned during a Sea Cadet career will impress employers and colleges.

Sea Cadet Values

Whilst being a cadet gives many benefits, membership does bring responsibilities. We ask for certain standards of behaviour. Cadets have to live up to the Sea Cadet Values, these are.

- Commitment
- Loyalty
- Discipline
- Honesty
- Teamwork

The unit's training staff encourage cadets to live up to these values. The staff too have to live up to the values they are expected be thoughtful and caring in the way they behave. The Sea Cadet Corps Code of Conduct lays down rules for staff behaviour.

When cadets finish their basic training they will be make the Sea Cadet promise.

The Sea Cadet Promise

*I promise to serve my God, the Queen, my Country and the Sea Cadet Corps,
and to obey the orders of my superior officers.*

*I will be proud of my uniform, and be smart and seamanlike in wearing it,
and always do my duty.*

Behaviour

As well as the positive values listed above, some behaviour is not acceptable:

- Bullying** Bullying can be emotional or physical, neither is tolerated and instances are firmly dealt with. Victims of bullying are encouraged to report it. We will also not put up with Bullying between cadets outside the unit.
- Smoking** Smoking is a harmful habit and does not fit in with the aim of the Sea Cadets. Only cadets over 16 will be allowed to smoke and then only if we have written permission from parents. If a cadet brings in a letter of permission we will check that it is genuine. Lying is not in keeping with Sea Cadet values, if we find cadets smoking we will tell their parents. All rules on smoking will be strictly enforced. Visiting parents will only be allowed to smoke in designated areas at designated times, please ask for details.
- Alcohol** Cadets are not allowed to drink alcohol during Sea Cadet training. Cadets who arrive under the influence will not be allowed to participate in training. Parents will always be told of alcohol related incidents.
- Drugs** Drug abuse is not tolerated. In particular, trying to bring drugs into the unit or trying persuade other cadets to use drugs will lead to dismissal from the unit. Parents will always be told of drug related incidents.
- Theft** In the closely packed team atmosphere of the unit there is no place for mistrust. The Royal Navy views stealing from your shipmates as a cardinal sin. Stealing will not be tolerated and will normally lead to dismissal from the unit.
- Cheating** Cheating in exams or tests is not in keeping with the values of the Sea Cadet Corps.

Activities, Supervision and Parental Consent

The unit has two weekly meetings (parades) on Tuesday and Fridays. We have theory and practical sessions on these parade nights. These are in subjects like Seamanship, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Cook Steward, Communications, Navigation, Writer Stores, and Drill. In the summer cadets are often taken to Draycote Water for practical boating.

There are many activities and courses that take place outside our normal parade times. These can happen on extra nights or at weekends and sometimes involve going away for weekends or longer. These activities include sailing, canoeing, wind surfing, pulling (rowing), power boating, Expedition Training (hill walking), competitions and extra training sessions.

Junior Sea Cadets	We always ask for written consent for any activities outside normal parade times. You will always receive written details of these activities. This is regardless of whether the activity involves an overnight stay or not.
Other Cadets	
Day Activities	For day activities we normally brief the cadets verbally, we do not ask for written permission for these activities. If you would rather we ask for your written permission please inform the Commanding Officer.
Overnight Activities	When a cadet goes to an overnight event, you will always get written details of the activities involved, location and contact details. We always ask for your consent for cadets to stay overnight, this is on a parent's consent form called a T1. Cadets are not allowed to stay overnight if they don't have a properly signed T1.

Important. When cadets go on National training courses they may have to travel by train without an accompanying adult. You will be told if this is the case at the time that the course booking is made. Young cadets normally travel in groups of three but older cadets may travel on their own.

Safety

The unit has specialist equipment such as boats, canoes, windsurfers and protective clothing. It is regularly maintained and externally inspected to make sure that it's in a safe condition. Most of the boating equipment is kept on site at Draycote Water reservoir near Rugby where we do our boating.

The Sea Cadets has strict rules on the qualification held by instructors. Where possible external bodies define the standards of instruction and check the quality of instructors. The standards set by the following bodies are followed by the Sea Cadets.

- Royal Yachting Association (RYA)
- British Canoe Union (BCU)
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme (D of E)
- Mountain Leadership Training Board (MLTB)

Where there is no suitable external organisation the Sea Cadets sets rigid rules for instructors to follow. Sea Cadet authorities from outside the unit check that we are following these rules properly. MOD appointed Health and Safety advisors also assist with risk assessments for any MOD approved training.

As most of our activities are on the water we prefer cadets to have basic swimming ability. However cadets wear Buoyancy Aids and non-swimmers must wear full lifejackets.

Commitment

A cadet has to make the following commitments.

- Make the Sea Cadet promise to show they will stick to the Sea Cadet values.
- Attend the unit regularly on normal parade nights.
- Make every effort to join in other training opportunities that come up.
- Attend the four annual compulsory parades;
 - Pre Royal Naval Inspection (normal parade night)
 - Royal Naval Inspection (normal parade night)
 - Remembrance Sunday (Nearest Sunday to 11th November)
 - Trafalgar Day (Nearest Sunday to 21st October).
- Wear the correct uniform as set down in standing orders.
- Keep up to date with payment of monthly donations.
- Return all uniform and equipment on leaving the unit. Note, parents are asked to sign for loaned uniforms.

The unit parades every Tuesday and Friday (with some exceptions) between 7.30pm and 9:30pm. Cadets should normally arrive after 7.00pm.

Joining Procedure

1. Agree a time for a unit tour; at least one parent must also attend the tour.
2. A form called a Cadet Enrolment and Record of Service form (called a P10) is issued to the parent and a start date is agreed.
3. There may be a waiting list if the New Entry class is full. We start several new cadets at the same time to give each other support.
4. Arrive by 19:15 on the start date, with the completed P10 signed by a parent. The P10 ensures that the new cadet is insured while at the unit.
5. After three weeks we issue a working uniform, but not until the uniform deposit and joining fee are paid in full.
6. After 8 – 10 weeks in New Entries the cadet will be issued with a full ceremonial uniform and take part in a passing out parade where they will read out the Sea Cadet Promise to the rest of the unit.

Divisions

When cadets finish basic training they are allocated to a Division. Each Division also has members of staff allocated to it. They are encouraged to take an interest in the welfare of the cadets in their division. Divisional staff are similar to form tutors at school. However, most training is carried out in groups made up from different Divisions, so cadets often build up good relationships with their specialist instructors who may not be from their own Division.

Unit Organisation

The unit is staffed by uniformed volunteers, there are four key staff who you need to be aware of.

Commanding Officer	(CO)	Responsible for the training and discipline of all members of the unit. He is also responsible for all aspects of safety in the unit.
First Lieutenant	(1stLt)	Second in command, the First Lieutenant directs the day to day operation of the unit by organising the duty, routine systems and managing the unit calendar. He administers discipline on behalf of the CO.
Training Officer	(TO)	Draws up an effective and enjoyable training programme. The Training Officer also looks after cadet course applications and organises cadet promotion.
Administration Officer	(UAO)	Looks after all records and collects any necessary payments from cadets.

Appointment of staff

The Commodore of the SCC appoints all Sea Cadet instructional staff. Every staff member is vetted before any unsupervised contact with the cadet is allowed.

Unit Management Committee

The legal, financial, property and charity affairs of a Unit are looked after by the Unit Management Committee (UMC). This consists of local people elected at an Annual General Meeting. The members of a UMC elect a Chairman, who becomes the Unit Chairman with wide-ranging responsibilities for the support of the Unit and the conduct of its affairs. Members of staff and cadets' parents are not allowed to sit on the UMC.

Parents and Supporters Association (P and SA)

This is a sub committee of the UMC, it's members are normally cadet's parents and relatives. The P&SA usually help raise funds for the unit by holding raffles and running stalls at fetes and similar events. The P&SA is always on the look out for new members, if you would like to assist contact the Commanding Officer.

Costs

Uniform Deposit	£10	This deposit is refunded when the cadet returns their uniform. This is a modest deposit given the high value of the uniform.
Joining Fee	£10	A fee that covers the cost of items bought by the unit during the cadet's career.
Monthly Donations (see <i>Gift Aid</i> below)	£3	This is a monthly donation by you to the unit. It helps to cover running costs of the unit.

Boots and Shoes	Varies	The MOD does not supply boots and shoes. The unit has some stocks of these but cadets may need to purchase these from MOD surplus shops. The unit has lists of such shops.
Losses	Varies	Cadets have to pay the full replacement costs of any items that they lose.
Cleaning	Varies	The full ceremonial uniform will need to be dry cleaned on average twice a year.

Gift Aid

The monthly donations (which have become known as subs) are a valuable source of income for the unit. Under the Inland Revenue Gift Aid scheme we can reclaim the basic rate of tax on your monthly donations. If you wish us to claim Gift Aid on your donations you can complete the Gift Aid declaration attached to the P10 enrolment form. Only income tax payers are eligible to make Gift Aid donations.

Nutty Bar

The nutty bar (naval term for the tuck shop) is operated by the UMC. It sells sweets, chocolate, crisps and drinks to the cadets during break periods. Any profit is used to buy equipment or help meet the unit's costs. Cadets who owe money to the unit will be barred from the Nutty until their arrears are cleared.

Payment Difficulties

We realise that some families may have a problem covering the cost of their child belonging to the unit. People with genuine difficulties should not be put off. The unit has access to various funds to support cadets. In particular the Surgeon Captain Rudland Memorial Fund helps cadets pay course fees.

Procedures

Regulations

The Sea Cadets Corps has laid down regulations and guidelines to direct the running of the Corps and protect its members. Key documents are.

Sea Cadet Regulations	SCR	Rules by which the SCC is governed
Training Afloat Regulations	TARS	Regulations for safety of SCC boats and associated safety equipment
Training Instructions	TI	Detailed instructions for all training in the SCC
Code of Conduct	-	A thorough guide to the standards of behaviour that must be met by all SCC adults.
Guidance to Commanding Officers on Maintaining Discipline Among Cadets	White Guide	A thorough guide to the treatment and discipline of cadets, this guide conforms to 2000 Child Protection Act.
Unit Standing Orders	USO	Orders issued locally by the CO to cover issues specific to each unit.
Unit Health and Safety Policy	H&S Policy	Health and Safety policy drafted by the CO.

Parents are entitled to see these documents at any time; they are available at the unit or at www.sccheadquarters.com (SCC wide documents) and <http://www.coventryseacadets.org.uk/> (Unit documents).

Discipline

The following is an extract from the White Guide to discipline:

The SCC is a youth organisation based on the sound traditions and values of the Royal Navy. Discipline forms an important part of that tradition and our training in the SCC should include an element of fair discipline, for safety reasons as well as for the social development of the young people in our care.

Many youngsters need nothing more than kindly advice and a quiet word to steer them in the right direction. However, it is important to set reasonable boundaries to acceptable behaviour, and ensure that Cadets remain within them. It is always an option to dismiss from the Corps any Cadet who transgresses, but this course of action should normally be regarded as a failure of our system rather than a handy solution. It is to be hoped that, in all but extreme cases, employment of a lesser penalty and the appropriate level of firmness, will put a wayward Cadet back on the right path and keep him/her in the Corps.

Normally staff that see misbehaviour deal with it there and then. If the problem is serious it will be referred to the 1stLt or CO. Only they can allocate penalties for misbehaviour. A written record of all these referrals and the outcome is kept. If a particular cadet's behaviour causes constant problems parents will be involved.

Examples of penalties that can be allocated are; caution, extra duties, loss of privileges, loss of Good Conduct Badges, disrating, suspension and dismissal. Awarding physical or cruel penalties is completely forbidden, as is any kind of financial deprivation.

Cadet Supervision

Only properly appointed (and therefore vetted) adult instructors are allowed to have unsupervised access to cadets. Training is carried out in mixed groups of boys and girls, the instructor will be the most suitable regardless of gender. However, in the interests of all concerned, an adult of the opposite gender has to be available in the vicinity to oversee welfare issues. He/she need not be uniformed but will be approved by the CO. Staff are instructed not to allow themselves to be placed in a position where they are alone in private with individual cadets of any gender.

Course Application

- Fill out a Course Request form (available from the Ship's office).
- Take the form home for a parent's signature, by signing the form parents confirm that;
 - the cadet is available to attend the course
 - the course fee can be paid
 - the parent is happy with the travel arrangements
 - if required time off school has been arranged.
- Return the form to the Ship's Office for processing.

Overnight Stays

Whenever cadets are asked to attend an overnight course they will always be supplied with a Cadet's Health Certificate and Parent's Consent Form (called a T1). Cadets will not be accepted at overnight events without this form. This form also contains medical and dietary information including details of medication. If a cadet brings medication that is not on the T1, whether it is prescribed or not, they will not be allowed to take it,.

Payments to the Unit

Monthly Donations These are collected every Friday night. Due to the number of payments involved receipts are not issued. However, a payment record book is kept, this book can be examined by parents at any time.

Other Payments Cadets are entitled to a receipt for all other payments made to the unit. The unit Administration Officer normally provides these.

Cheques for the unit should be made out to: *Coventry Sea Cadets Admin A/C.*

Picking up Cadets

Unit staff are under orders not to leave the unit until all cadets have been collected or have started their journey home (when parents are happy for them to travel alone). When coming back to the unit from training events cadets are encouraged to phone ahead with estimated return time. Please bear in mind that staff can't leave until all cadets have been collected. Sometimes travel plans or departure times can be disrupted, when this happens cadets are instructed to keep parents informed of changed timings. Details of estimated return times can be obtained by calling any of the numbers on the cover of this guide.

When collecting cadets, could parents please consider our neighbours and watch out for cadets running out of the unit.

Health & Safety

The unit has a Health and Safety policy that is reviewed annually. Copies are available from the unit or from www.coventryseacadets.org.uk

Insurance

Sea Cadet personnel are fully covered for personal injury and public liability during Sea Cadet training; this cover is made up of a combination of MOD liability and commercial insurance cover. Personal property and effects are **not** included in this cover and it is suggested that parents ensure cover is in place through normal household policies. Cadets should not bring high value items to Sea Cadet training events.

Complaint and Grievance

Cadets with complaints or grievances should take them to their Divisional or instructional staff. If the matter is serious they can go directly to the 1stLt. Complaints will be dealt with through the chain of command and if necessary taken to the Commanding Officer.

Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns or problems with the CO. However, if parents are not satisfied they have the right to make a formal complaint. This should be sent in writing to the CO. The CO will make the Unit Chairman aware of the complaint and investigate it fully. After the investigation a written response will be provided.

If parents are not satisfied with the response to a formal complaint the matter can be referred to the District Officer. Complaints relating to the CO or Unit Chairman can be sent directly to the District Officer, though the unit should be copied. The CO has to provide the District Officer's contact details for either of the last two situations.

It is worth noting that complaints or grievances taken to higher levels of authority in the Sea Cadet are always sent back down the chain of command for action. Following the correct channels will always get a fair and prompt response.